

**2020 Christine Blair - Candidate Mayor**

Colchester and Cumberland Counties have just signed a \$60.1 million project with Xplornet. What additional infrastructure would you work with Councillors for Colchester to provide, within the broadband program, to maximize benefits?

The Municipalities of Colchester and Cumberland have collaborated to attract construction of a major optic fibre-based network for rural broadband in our two jurisdictions. Network construction has begun, and wireless services are available. The network infrastructure will be Open Access for other internet service providers to rent wholesale capacity. That will allow access for improved cell phone service, for example. The network will be built, owned, and operated by Xplornet Communications. This agreement took two years of hard work and dedication. Once the project is complete, other needs may be identified but the goal now is to provide high speed internet to rural Colchester where it has no service or is underserviced and to have the full project completed within two to three years.



Christine Blair

**What do you believe is the most important issue(s) facing the municipality?**

During my four years as Mayor, Colchester County has had an ambitious agenda. We were aware internet connectivity in rural Colchester was a problem and addressed that problem. Green energy through our Solar Colchester Program, wind turbines, and our Community Energy & Emissions Plan that lays out a strategy to move toward a more efficient, affordable and resilient energy future. Our Debert Business Park and Airport has significant growth potential for economic development and jobs. The promotion of the Cliffs of Fundy UNESCO Global Geopark has begun to attract tourism, create business opportunities. The Fundy Discovery Site at the head of the Bay is the first Geosite. Physician Recruitment is key to the health and well-being of Colchester Residents. Each of these issues is important to Colchester County.

**Should Council change its plan on J-Class roads which previously has asked property owners contribute to repaving or rebuilding costs? If so, what % would you suggest?**

Colchester County has signed a new three-year agreement with the NS Dept. of Transportation & Infrastructure this past month which will allow 50/50 cost sharing on the re-paving of residential and subdivision streets. A review will determine whether property owners will continue to contribute to the municipal 50% of the cost sharing. Colchester is currently getting information on what other municipalities are doing, what the financial implications and commitments may be to the County and our taxpayers. Once that research is done, an informed decision can be made.

**Should Debert Airport and Debert Business Park be included among the municipality's top three economic development priorities?**

Debert Business Park and Debert Airport has been at the centre of our economic development activities for new business attraction and existing business expansion. DBP has 50 businesses including four major distribution centres, and a prime. In 2017, we began collaborating with Stanfield International on complementary development for the airport. Council approved the purchase of the former Orenda property and hangar in July, 2020, for the purpose of economic activity with the aviation business sector. The first occupant is expected to bring as many as 90 full-time jobs. The DBP and Debert Airport are currently economic development priorities.

**Should the municipality become the lead developer of residential lots or sub-divisions on some of the vast acreage of former CFB Debert, which are not needed or ideal for commercial development?**

The Municipality of Colchester is an enabler for development. Colchester County welcomes developers and works with them to find the most appropriate areas to fit their needs. We have both residential and commercial land for sale, which we market and promote. This spring Council formed a new standing committee, the Debert Business Park Advisory Committee. It will consist of the Mayor, area Councillor plus two other councillors, two representatives of the DBP business community and a Debert resident. The mandate of the committee will be to advise Council on economic development of the DBP, attracting business, selling and leasing properties, infrastructure planning, housing and business development opportunities.

With real estate costs in Halifax and other major urban centres soaring to new heights, should Colchester encourage new or existing sub-division developers to increase availability of lots to attract new residents who wish to live in "quasi-rural" areas, to enjoy a different lifestyle?

Colchester County is a wonderful place to live, work, play, to raise a family, do business, and to enjoy all the amenities of city living but with a more relaxed lifestyle. The Truro Colchester Partnership for Economic Prosperity has been working with Colchester County municipalities and the business community to promote the Colchester Region. We have seen increased housing developments throughout the County and developers know we welcome them. The high real estate costs in and closer to Halifax are one of the variables but also is the fact Maritimers want to come home after living and working out of province for a number of years. The TCPEP's ability to attract business here is another variable which may increase the need for more housing for residents who will be working in these businesses.

**What should Colchester do to encourage developments which will deliver the services and accommodate what could be thousands of visitors/potential new residents attracted to the area as a result of UNESCO's designation of the Cliffs of Fundy GeoPark?**

Colchester and Cumberland Counties have an agreement to work together on the Cliffs of Fundy UNESCO Global Geopark. A governing body for the Geopark has been formed with representation from both municipalities, and with representation from geoscientists, citizens, provincial government. It is working on infrastructure, marketing, promotion, and future plans for the Geopark. The second agreement with Cumberland County is the rural broadband internet project with Xplornet, a vital component for the promotion of the Geopark. These two collaborative agreements between Colchester and Cumberland Counties are unprecedented in the history of our two municipalities. We see the two projects being interconnected for positive business opportunities and tourism growth in our rural communities.

Colchester has a new hospital, RECC Centre, DalAg Campus, Nova Scotia Community College, excellent geographical location and many other assets all within two hours drive to other major urban centres and almost one million consumers in NB, PEI, and HRM. Where does the municipality need to focus to achieve probable levels of residential and commercial develop, which could result in the Municipality being among the fastest growing municipalities in the province?

Colchester County is already one of the fastest growing municipalities in the province. We need to continue building on our strengths. Those strengths include, but are not limited to, collaboration with Truro, Stewiacke, Millbrook First Nation, and our business communities to achieve mutually beneficial goals; collaboration with our key educational facilities, Dalhousie AC and the NS Community College; promoting our beautiful communities, culture and lifestyle; building and retaining our workforce; diversifying our economy; supporting business growth; enabling development; infrastructure and services. This takes planning strategically, budgeting wisely, maintaining low tax rates and being responsible to our taxpayers. Our municipality's focus is on many interconnected issues.

**What approach to municipal governance will you take to ensure all councillors and staff are working together as a unified team?**

Councillors and staff in Colchester currently work together in the best interests of our residents. Each councillor at our table has the right to speak on any issue from that Councillor's perspective and experi-

ence. Our staff, through our CAO, is given Council direction to fulfill Council's wishes. "Unified team" should be teamwork. I believe in listening to advice given, seeking information, encouraging diversity of thought, asking the tough questions, looking at all perspectives, pros and cons, and all sides of an issue, to come to a conclusion. Councillors are encouraged to do the same. Teamwork at our table has achieved a lot of positive goals.

**What is most needed in the municipality to maintain quality of life and to grow with sustainability?**

We need to continue building on our strengths. But we also need to improve on our vulnerabilities and weaknesses. Some of this is addressed through our rural broadband internet project, which will provide high speed internet and better cell phone service to our rural communities within two to three years. This also will help attract and retain doctors for our rural communities. Poverty, homelessness, employment challenges have been increased because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Protecting our environment for future generations is crucial. Collaboration and working together is important to maintain our quality of life and to grow with sustainability.

**What professional or personal experience do you bring to the table to ensure council is unified and efforts are maximized for the betterment of residential and commercial interests?**

A good leader should have a wealth of experience and management expertise, something I have acquired with 28 years in municipal government as Mayor, as a Councillor and as a Village Commissioner, and in both the public and private sectors. I have a wide range of experience that has served me, and the people of Colchester County, positively and progressively over the past four years. It is a full-time job to which I give my time and energy in a professional manner while recognizing the potential of Colchester County. In my personal life, my husband, Bill Blair, and I raised two sons and have two grandchildren. I assisted with the private family business, R&B Blair Sales & Service, North River, for 35 years. I volunteered in my community for a variety of organizations. As Mayor, the residents of Colchester County are my number one priority. I will continue to use my leadership, experience and ability to take action to collaboratively solve issues and find solutions for a more prosperous Colchester. It has been my privilege to work hard as your Mayor these last four years. We have seen the darkest of days but go forward together to a brighter future.



# MAGNOLIA

CLASSIC CABINETRY

[www.magnoliaclassiccabinetry.ca](http://www.magnoliaclassiccabinetry.ca) or email: [info@magnoliaclassiccabinetry.ca](mailto:info@magnoliaclassiccabinetry.ca) or call us: 1-902-843-4140

"When visiting Masstown Pharmacy check out the quality we built into the counters and pharmacy work stations".

**RE-ELECT**

# LLOYD GIBBS

## COUNCILLOR DISTRICT 5



**ELECTION DAY IS SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17**

Please contact me if you have a question or concern, or you require transportation on Election Day.

**902-843-1084 gibbsdistrict5@gmail.com**

**RE-ELECT LLOYD GIBBS FOR DISTRICT 5**

Authorized by the official agent for Lloyd Gibbs.

# Cozy

as your  
favourite flannel!

**OIL & PROPANE**

**5¢ per litre BACK**

\*Conditions apply.

**Sign Up Today**

**902-895-4429 | wilsonsheating.ca**

**Wilsons**  
**Heating**

\*New customers only, see website for details. Ends December 31st, 2020. Some conditions apply.